

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 7, 9 and 11 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend claims 1-6, 8, 10 and 12 as follows:

**LISTING OF CURRENT CLAIMS**

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A multiple-fold umbrella comprising:

a central shaft; and

a rib assembly pivotally secured to said central shaft;

said rib assembly including: a top rib pivotally secured to an upper notch

5 formed on a top of said central shaft, a stretcher rib pivotally secured to said top rib and a runner slidably held on said central shaft, an intermediate rib respectively pivotally secured to said stretcher rib and secured to said top rib through an inner connecting rib, a resilient connecting rib slidably coupled to said intermediate rib, and a rear rib respectively pivotally secured to said intermediate rib and said resilient  
10 connecting rib through a joint;

~~the improvement which comprises:~~ wherein said stretcher rib having a spring device resiliently held therein ~~in said stretcher rib~~, said spring device having an inner portion thereof protruding inwardly to said runner to be secured in said stretcher rib ~~or secured to said runner~~, and having an outer portion of said spring device pivotally  
15 connected with said resilient connecting rib;

said joint including: a pivotal portion pivotally secured to an outer end of said intermediate rib by a first pivot, and a biasing portion having the rear rib secured therewith and pivotally secured to an outer end of said resilient connecting rib by a second pivot;

20 said resilient connecting rib having its inner and outer rib portions respectively limited by an inner and an outer retainer formed on opposite end portions of said intermediate rib, said outer portion of said resilient connecting rib operatively bent when opening the umbrella to store a spring energy of the outer portion of said resilient connecting rib in order for resiliently biasing said joint to extend said rear rib  
25 outwardly for forming a linear rib assembly for quickly opening the umbrella; and

30        said resilient connecting rib defining an axial line  $L_1$ , which is unaligned with  
      a linking line  $L_2$  by linearly linking the first pivot and the second pivot of said joint,  
      whereby upon folding of the rib assembly when closing the umbrella, the outer end  
      of the resilient connecting rib will thrust the biasing portion of the joint counter-  
35        clockwise for retracting the rear rib and the rib assembly for closing the umbrella;  
      whereby upon opening of the umbrella, the resilient connecting rib has its  
inner rib portion resiliently cushioned by said spring device in said stretcher rib, and  
said resilient connecting rib, as retained by said intermediate rib, will be arcuately  
bent to store its spring energy which will then restore to bias said joint and to eject  
35        said rear rib outwardly to extend the rib assembly linearly for quickly opening the  
umbrella.

Claim 2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The multiple-fold umbrella according to  
Claim 1, wherein said stretcher rib includes a wide groove formed in an inner ~~or~~  
~~upper~~ portion of said stretcher rib, and a narrow groove portion in an outer ~~or lower~~  
portion of said stretcher rib communicated with said wide groove.

Claim 3. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The multiple-fold umbrella according to  
Claim 1, wherein said spring device includes: a spring having its inner spring end  
secured in said stretcher rib adjacent to said runner, and a rod secured to an outer  
spring end of said spring; said spring slidably held in a wide groove formed in said  
stretcher rib, and said rod slidably held in a narrow groove portion formed in said  
stretcher rib and communicated with said wide groove.

Claim 4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The multiple-fold umbrella according to  
Claim 3, wherein said rod has its inner rod end connected with said spring and a free  
outer rod end adjacent to an outer end of said stretcher rib that is pivotally  
connected with the intermediate rib, said rod having a hook portion protruding  
outwardly from an outer portion of the rod, through a slot notched in said stretcher  
rib, to be pivotally connected with an inner end of a resilient connecting rib.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The multiple-fold umbrella according to Claim 1, wherein said intermediate rib is formed by plastic molding process, and including an inner retainer and an outer retainer respectively formed on an inner portion and an outer portion of said intermediate rib for limiting said resilient connecting rib within a main groove recessed in said intermediate rib for slidably coupling said resilient connecting rib to said intermediate rib.

Claim 6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The multiple-fold umbrella according to Claim 5, wherein said intermediate rib includes said main groove recessed in an inner ~~or lower~~ portion of said intermediate rib, and a shallow groove recessed in an outer ~~or upper~~ portion of said stretcher rib, said inner retainer formed in said main groove adjacent to a stretcher rib and an inner connecting rib, and said outer retainer formed in said main groove adjacent to a joint, with said joint pivotally connecting a rear rib with said resilient connecting rib and said intermediate rib.

Claim 7. (Canceled)

Claim 8. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The multiple-fold umbrella according to Claim ~~7~~ 1, wherein said joint ~~is formed as a P-shape; and~~ includes a flat edge portion upwardly retained by a retainer plate formed on an upper outer portion of said intermediate rib when opening the umbrella; and a shallow recess formed in said flat edge portion for receiving the outer end of said resilient connecting rib when closing the umbrella.

Claim 9. (Canceled)

Claim 10. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The multiple-fold umbrella according to Claim 2, wherein said stretcher rib has its wide groove operatively engaged with a top rib and an inner connecting rib when closing the umbrella; and said narrow groove portion of said stretcher rib operatively engaged with a main groove as recessed in said intermediate rib.

Claim 11. (Canceled)

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The multiple-fold umbrella according to Claim 1, wherein said spring device is slidably held in ~~a groove recessed in the~~ the stretcher rib, and includes: a spring having its inner spring end orienting inwardly towards the runner and secured in the stretcher rib ~~and, a slide member secured with an outer spring end secured to a slide member, of said spring with the slide member and~~ slidably held in ~~the groove in the~~ the stretcher rib, and having a hook portion protruding outwardly from said slide member through a slot notched in the stretcher rib to be connected with an inner end of the resilient connecting rib.